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SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED  
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DEPT FOR EB/TRA/OTP  
DAKAR FOR FAA REP  
ROME FOR TSA REP  
FAA FOR NANCY ANGELO  
FAA FOR API-1/AFS-50/AGC-7

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [ECON](#) [EAIR](#) [SF](#)  
SUBJECT: FAA INTERNATIONAL AVIATION SAFETY ASSESSMENT  
RESULTS DELIVERED

REF: STATE 00721

11. (U) Summary. Post delivered results of the FAA International Aviation Safety Assessment (IASA) to South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) officials on January 7, 2008 (reftel). Economic Counselor used the opportunity to discuss continued civil aviation cooperation including logistics for the upcoming January 15-17, 2008, TSA assessment. SACAA CEO/Commissioner Captain Colin

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Jordaan supported continued cooperation and discussed expansion of routes to the United States. Jordaan had the opportunity to express his appreciation of FAA's professional and cooperative relationship with SACAA to the Chair of the House Subcommittee on Aviation on January 10, 12008. End Summary.

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Response to FAA IASA Results  
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12. (U) Economic Counselor, Minerals and Energy Officer, and Transportation Officer provided formal notification of SAG's continued Category I rating under the FAA IASA program to SACAA officials, including CEO/Commissioner Captain Colin Jordaan and SACAA Board Chairman Duke Moorosi, delivering a letter from the FAA Flight Standards Director James J. Ballough on January 7, 2008. Jordaan and Moorosi were accompanied by a team of 12 officials and used the formal notification as a photo opportunity in advance of a SACAA press release. (See <http://www.caa.co.za/> for press release dated January 7, 2008). Economic Counselor also used the opportunity to introduce the newly arrived Transportation Officer, who will be an additional point of contact for SACAA officials.

13. (U) Captain Jordaan expressed relief in receiving the official confirmation of Category I status. He emphasized that the results indicated a positive response by FAA to SACAA's process to implement changes as outlined in its action plan for the FAA. He added that the FAA should expect radical changes when the assessment team returns in May 2008 for a follow-up consultation. (Note: The South African Workers' Day holiday on May 1 should be taken into account when scheduling this follow-up consultation). Jordaan said a huge recruitment drive is underway to fill vacancies identified during the FAA assessment. SACAA has already hired 21 new airworthiness inspectors and expects

them to complete training by March. Additional inspectors will be hired in the coming months.

14. (SBU) Jordan said SACAA would be relying on the SAA as the primary source for its new operations inspectors, as the SAA continues its restructuring program. Once the SAA knows how many of its "low-end" pilots will be picked up by foreign airlines like Emirates Airlines, the SAA will know how many of its "high-end" pilots it can release to meet the SACAA's requirements for experienced pilots to serve as inspectors. He explained that SAA does not want to release too many pilots until it has a better idea of total pilot loss to its competitors.

15. (U) Responding to a question about plans for the passage of new civil aviation legislation, Jordaan said the SAG has decided to review all existing aviation legislation and replace it with one comprehensive act. According to Jordaan, Minister of Transport Jeff Redebe has personally committed to expediting this process and completing it within eighteen months. A final time frame for legislative harmonization and progress to date will be presented to FAA during the May follow-up consultation.

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TSA Assessment

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16. (U) SACAA officials indicated a need for additional information concerning the upcoming TSA assessment of SAA and Delta air carriers from January 15-17, 2008. According to these officials, SAA expressed surprise at the short notice provided for the TSA assessment. SACAA has informed SAA and has requested a confirmation of readiness. Jordaan explained that SAA had recently lost some of its senior

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staff as a result of the SAA's on-going restructuring, which might have caused them to be surprised by the timing of the TSA assessment. Regardless, Jordan said TSA or any other aviation authority should be able conduct an audit or assessment without advance notice.

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Expansion of SAA Routes  
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17. (SBU) Responding to a question about the expansion of routes to the U.S., Jordaan said SAA is considering a new route between Miami and Cape Town. He believes a new route to Miami would be commercially viable, as was previously the case with the American Airlines code-share, but technical feasibility issues with the Airbus 380 are holding back a decision. (Note: SAA has phased out the use of Boeing 747s for its international flights). Specifically, oxygen availability could become a problem on the Airbus 380 if decompression occurred during the proposed flight. Jordaan said that, unlike the Boeing 747, the Airbus 380 does not have sufficient oxygen supplies in the event that such a decompression occurred. According to Jordaan, the Boeing 747 can complete the flight at an altitude of 14,000 or 10,000 feet with its existing oxygen supply. With the Airbus 380, 30 less passengers would be required to be able to carry the extra fuel needed to complete the flight at the necessary lower altitude. These 30 passengers represent the profit margin for the flight, making it commercially unviable. SAA will continue to try to find a way around this technical problem. If a solution can be found, the SAA would consider the establishment of a Miami to Cape Town route.

Continued Cooperation  
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18. (U) Jordaan said the SACAA is supported in its efforts by Minister Redebe. For example, Redebe authorized the SACAA press release announcing the results of the FAA assessment on January 7, 2008, and spoke with Secretary of Transport Mary Peters on January 8, 2007. Jordaan also noted that South Africa's preparations for the 2010 FIFA World Cup could serve as an opportunity for continued cooperation with the United States. Jordaan closed the meeting by reiterating the SACAA's commitment to achieve the goals it outlined during the FAA's December 2007 consultation. Jordaan praised the FAA for its cooperative and professional relationship with SACAA. SACAA Class A1 Project Manager Riaan Myburgh also indicated a desire to work with the FAA on safety oversight and surveillance issues in the broader Southern African Development Community (SADC).

19. (U) Jordaan participated in the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure's call on Minister Redebe on January 10. Jordaan was able to visit with Subcommittee on Aviation Chairman Jerry Costello (D-IL) prior to Redebe's arrival. Jordaan discussed the SACAA action plan with Chairman Costello and said his biggest problem was finding qualified pilots to serve as operations inspectors. He said the FAA had offered technical assistance to help the SACAA complete its action plan, but that he did not think the SACAA needed assistance at this time. Nevertheless, he would not hesitate to ask for it if it were needed. Costello was also able to visit Cape Town International Airport on January 11, while the rest of the delegation visited Robben Island.

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